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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/087,592	03/01/2002	Masaki Hayashi	2842.09US01	7915

24113 7590 12/04/2003

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EXAMINER

JOYCE, WILLIAM C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3682

DATE MAILED: 12/04/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/087,592

Applicant(s)

HAYASHI ET AL.

Examiner

William C. Joyce

Art Unit

3682

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 October 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1,2 and 8-11 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 3-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) Z 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

This Office Action is in response to the Election filed October 20, 2003 for the above identified patent application.

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election with traverse of Group I in Paper No. 9 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the examiner has not provided particular reasons for requiring an Election of the different disclosed embodiments and therefore applicant has not had an opportunity to address the Examiner's concerns with respect to the Election requirement. This is not found persuasive because the Election requirement mailed on 9/17/03 describes the species of Groups I-VII as being patentably distinct. A patentably distinct species is one having a separate subject of inventive effort. A search of multiple species having diverging subject matter is a serious burden on the examiner. For example, the embodiments of Groups I and IV are distinct because the species of Figure 1 illustrates a shift device mounted on a vehicle consol and the species of Figure 11 illustrates a shift device mounted on a vehicle steering wheel. The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

2. Claims 1-2 and 8-11 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in Paper No. 9.

Priority

3. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Suman et al. (US Patent 5,161,422).

Suman et al. illustrates (Figure 1) a shift device comprising a casing (32), a dome-shaped knob (34) protruding from the casing.

6. Claims 3, 4, 6, and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Nakumura (JP 10-16594).

Nakumura illustrates (Figure 1) a shift device comprising a casing (11), a dome-shaped knob (14) protruding from the casing, push buttons (16,17) extending through holes formed in the knob, wherein an operator's fingers engage the push buttons.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakumura (JP 10-16594) as applied to claim 3 above, and further in view of Horibe (JP 10-0591332).

Nakumura does not appear to disclose the knob having means for locking the knob against inclination, but Horibe teaches locking means for locking a shifting device from movement. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the device of Nakumura with locking means, as taught by Horibe, motivation being to prevent the transmission from being shifted into a predetermined operating position.

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Note the shifting device of MacInnis ('603), Onodera ('442), and Hojin ('246).

Application/Control Number: 10/087,592
Art Unit: 3682

Page 5

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William C. Joyce whose telephone number is (703) 305-5114. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday 7:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Bucci can be reached on (703) 308-3668. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9326.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.


William C. Joyce 12/1/03